

thirties finds rather surprising the very large amount of space in their later works devoted to the refutation of so-called "Funcfronahsm" and "Functional Democracy/' the reason is that, from 1913 until the great post-war slump set in, this movement appeared to be carrying everything before it The organisation of Shop Stewards' Committees in munitions and engineering and ship-building establishments, together with the foundation of the National Building Guild, seemed, at the time, to indicate the beginning of a radical transformation both of Trade Union structure and function Lenin, in 1919, not only thought that England was on the eve of revolution, on account of the spread of this movement he regarded Sidney Webb's opposition to it as a sign that he was ^{<e} working in the interests of the Capitalists " But the \ery comments Lenin then made, as recorded by Arthur Ransome, in his *Six Weeks in Russia*, show that he was under a natural enough misapprehension both as to the scale and the ideology of Gild Socialism He thought that the Shop Stewards' Committees represented a form of Sowet, he did not know that Cole himself, in the interest of "all power to the producers"⁵ was, from 1918 on, as a matter of fact, hot against Sovietism, and busily fighting against it inside the I L P , wheie he found himself, about 1919-20, in an odd, temporary alliance with Mac-Donald Sovietism had but a brief "run" in Britain, for it, as for Gild Socialism, the Webbs on one line, Mac-Donald on another, proved too strong Neither the I L P

nor the Fabian Society was 'converted'⁵ to either. At any time, and on any issue, an alliance between the Webb-

MacDonald forces was almost irresistible

By 1920, the Webbs could write that Syndicalism was "a ferment rather than a statistically important element in the Trade Union world", five years later, they would hardly have assigned even so much significance to Guild Socialism. Yet it had its importance, both at the time, and